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NEWS AND NOTES

THE GREATEST MEETING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF TEACHERS OF ENGLISH

The Thanksgiving meeting of the National Council at Chattanooga promises to be the largest and most interesting in the history of the organization. For this there are several reasons:

The convention trip to Chattanooga will include a half-day excursion to the historic battlefields of Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, and Lookout Mountain. This five-hour automobile ride through picturesque scenery will be followed by the annual dinner and an evening free for the private discussions so valued by experienced convention-goers.

This will be the first meeting of the National Council to be held in the South. Comparatively few of the southern teachers of English have been engaged in the work of the Council. This year, however, a southern committee is advertising the convention very extensively among their own people. There is every reason to think that their efforts will be successful. This gives a further reason for people from other sections to attend the Council, inasmuch as they will have an unparalleled opportunity for becoming acquainted with new and worthwhile workers in their own field.

Chattanooga is large enough to furnish the accommodations needed, but small enough so that a convention and its delegates will not be lost. More frequent encounters and more fellowship are sure to result. Moreover, there will be less distraction from other interests in this case. The sight-seeing opportunity afforded by the Friday afternoon trip will quite counterbalance the opportunities of theater, opera, and department store shopping which the larger cities offer, and yet will not interfere with any of the sessions.

The program promises to be an unusually strong one. There will be, because of the exceptionally favorable train schedules, at least two general sessions, two sessions devoted to section meetings, besides the usual annual dinner and conferences. The section meetings will include not only those for high school and college, as has been the custom recently, but meetings for the elementary teachers as well. Some of the topics which will be discussed are the erection of professional standards, sane testing, English courses and the demands of life, improvement of teach-

ing conditions, school journalism, and redefinition of the objectives in literature. For the complete program see the November *Journal*.

The railroads have for the first time granted the Council a special rate, offering one and one-half fare upon the condition that there are 250 or more tickets purchased. Each delegate will secure a certificate upon purchasing his ticket to Chattanooga and when 250 such certificates have been deposited with the agent in Chattanooga, he will stamp them, entitling their possessors to purchase return tickets at half-fare. Why not use the Thanksgiving vacation for a sight-seeing-professional holiday?

AMERICAN SPEECH WEEK

The American Speech Committee is announcing two speech weeks for this year. The first is set for the usual date, November 6-11, and the other for February 19-24. Each week includes a national holiday.

The advantages of a Better Speech Week in November are numerous. Attention is called to speech at the beginning of the school year. Conflict with other school activities regularly conducted later in the year is avoided. First impressions are vivid; an early week conducted with spirit impresses itself upon the minds of the students, etc. Yet many teachers have felt that the week comes too early. These feel that the beginning and organization of the school work in the fall leave little time for outside activities. Where a teacher is new to the community as so often happens in the rural districts (which are placing so much emphasis on the week just now) November comes too soon. By February a closer touch with the community has been established.

Then again, some teachers desire to conduct two weeks, each at the beginning of a semester. Consequently, the Committee has felt it advisable to list two different weeks.

The American Federation of Women's Clubs will stress the work among the clubs during the second week in November. Consequently, where the work of the clubs and schools is co-ordinated the November date should be selected.

More and more, however, we must come to realize that attention must be given to speech during the whole year, rather than spasmodically. The observance of a speech week does not signify that attention is given only during that week. But in too many instances such is apt to be the case. A speech week conducted with vigor and enthusiasm, thoroughly prepared for and followed up by consistent class work, represents the acme of achievement.

What the Committee desires to see is a wholesome attitude toward American speech maintained in the land. American speech is not essentially different from English speech, when broadly considered. The English language is now the language spoken by more people in the world than any other. Whether it may become the universal language, the need for which has been so long felt, depends upon those who speak it. If it is kept free from pedantry, kept expressive and virile, it probably will be able to fill the need. Such in itself is a goal of sufficient magnitude to warrant citizen, teacher, and student giving daily regard to speech.

But none the less valuable is the consideration of the social and vocational demands already established. Much commonplace and vulgar speech is heard in social and vocational association. Yet the more refined, the educated, men and women of today use and expect among their associates and employees an adequate speech. It is not necessary to define adequate speech here. But what it is, and what it is not, must increasingly become common knowledge. No one desires this art, any more than any other art, defined in terms of mathematical precision.

The tests we should apply to speech are: (1) audibility; (2) expressiveness of voice and body; (3) expressiveness of language; (4) effectiveness of selection and arrangement of ideas; and (5) personal power, which is the synthesis of the foregoing points.

Speech is a unitary act. Good speech is the outgrowth of effective education in all branches of study. But it can no more be developed without a proper environment than any other cultural attainment. For speech is not an instinct. We are not born with any language as an inherited trait. All language is acquired. And in so far as the average American community is concerned, the knowledge of, and to a great degree the use of, good speech rests with the teacher, and specifically with the teachers of oral and written composition.

Then, let not the fact be overlooked that a new class enters the school every year, that new teachers fresh from training colleges become the teachers of these students every year, and that a momentum for better speech can be established or maintained from one class to the next only by persistent, sensible, intelligent effort.

Therefore, the committee on American speech presents again the annual request for observance of Better Speech Week. Our plan is to have a representative in every state to whom appeal may be made for advice and direction in case the need for this is felt. The list of these appointees will be published in the next issue of the *Journal*. But for the present, material should be ordered from the following:

I. The National Council of Teachers of English, 506 West Sixty-ninth Street, Chicago, which lists the following publications:

1. *Guide to American Speech Week*, revised. Price 25 cents.
2. Advertisement leaflet, for use in state and county campaigns.

Price 5 cents per copy. Two cents each in quantities of the dozen.

3. Suggestions for club programs throughout the year. Price 10 cents.
4. Bibliography for teachers interested in educational aspects of speech. Price 10 cents.

5. *The Better Speech Movement and the World of Business*. Price, 5 cents; 25 cents a dozen.

II. The American Federation of Women's Clubs, American Speech Committee, Mrs. K. K. Robbins, Chairman, 410 South Michigan Boulevard, Chicago.

1. Bulletin on *Better American Speech* (containing a superior list of references). Price 2 cents.

III. The University of Illinois; Professor H. G. Paul, Urbana, Illinois. Price 10 cents each.

1. *A New Step in Composition—Oral Forms* by John M. Clapp.
2. *Better Speech Week in Decatur* by Olive M. Bear.
3. *Speaking of Speech* by Clarence Stratton.
4. *Home Cooperation in Promoting Good Speech* by L. W. Rader.
5. *Eradicating Speech Errors* by Olive M. Bear.
6. *Every Student's Progress* by H. De F. Widger.

IV. The University of Iowa, Iowa City, in care of The University Editor, Bulletin on *Better Speech*. Price 5 cents.

In addition to the foregoing sources of material, consult the *Reader's Guide* and past numbers of the *English Journal* for September and October.

The Committee is very eager to learn of the Better Speech Week activities of the schools and clubs. Send in a statement of the program you follow. It will prove profitable to others. New hints for arousing interest are as helpful in the teaching profession as in the business world.

UNIVERSITY OF IOWA, IOWA CITY GLENN N. MERRY, *Chairman*

POETRY IN THE SCHOOL

The *Gleam*, a magazine of poetry for secondary-school students throughout the country, began publication with an advance edition of 1,500 distributed free at the National Education Association Convention in Boston, July, 1922. This is a novel project with a national scope. The advisory board of the magazine consists of Professor Raymond Alden (Leland Stanford), Katherine Lee Bates (Wellesley), Grace Hazard Conkling (Smith), Professor John Erskine (Columbia), Percy

MacKaye (Miami University), Professor John Manly (University of Chicago), Josephine Preston Peabody, and Charles Swain Thomas (Harvard). The magazine is the official organ of a society of educators who believe that poetry can and should exert a wider influence than it now does in the lives of secondary-school pupils. It is founded upon a deep belief in the humanizing, refining, idealizing power of poetry in the life of any young man or young woman to whom it can be made a pleasure. We believe that the potentialities of poetry in this direction are not being sufficiently utilized. We believe that we can insure wider utilization by providing poetry more in harmony with the actual, imaginative, and emotional lives of young people, and by inducing methods of teaching poetry which shall emphasize human and cultural values rather than formal elements. We believe it is possible to make the teaching of poetry definite without resorting to technicalities or formalism in our search for something teachable. In short, we propose to provide pupil and teacher alike with means and methods for the greater enjoyment of poetry.

Not only are we to provide for the wider and more effective *impression* of poetry, but we are also presenting a stimulating opportunity for *expression*. Pupils will be given space for expressing themselves in poetry, and also about poetry.

More specifically, then, the magazine which will be published regularly September to June, inclusive, will have sixteen pages and will contain the following features:

1. Modern poems (selected and reprinted) with informal foreword and suggestions for interpretation, seven to eight pages.
2. One or two standard poems with similar foreword and suggestions, about three pages.
3. A single unpublished poem by a living poet of prominence. (A poem by Katherine Lee Bates appears in the first issue.)
4. Poems by students, two to three pages (perhaps more).
5. Student letters or essays about poetry, one page.
6. Editorial, one page or less.

Educators, librarians, poets, and the general public, if interested in the project, may make application for membership, inclosing one dollar annual dues, and being accepted will receive the magazine for one year. Secondary-school students may obtain the magazine for ten cents a copy for groups or class use by making application through their teacher. For membership, subscription, or further information apply to Paul S. Nickerson, Principal of the High School, Canton, Massachusetts.

The officers of the society referred to above are: president, George Herbert Palmer; vice-president, Percy W. Long; secretary-treasurer, Paul S. Nickerson; executive committee, Katherine Shute, Samuel Thurber, Jr., George H. Browne, Sallie Dawes, James F. Hosic, and a member to be appointed by the American Library Association.

TWENTY-FIVE BOOKS FOR A ONE-ROOM SCHOOL

The librarians and teachers of the United States at the recent conferences of the American Library Association and the National Education Association selected by ballot a list of good books for a one-room school, comprising twenty-five books for children in grades one to eight.

Little Women by Louise M. Alcott comes first on the list chosen by librarians and first on the list chosen by teachers.

Following this on both lists were:

Lewis Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*.

Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*.

Mark Twain, *Tom Sawyer*.

Stevenson, *Treasure Island*.

The other books which appear on the joint list are:

Nicolay, *Boys' Life of Abraham Lincoln*.

Kipling, *Jungle Book*.

Andersen's *Fairy Tales*.

Aesop's *Fables*.

Pyle, *Merry Adventures of Robin Hood*.

Stevenson, *Child's Garden of Verses*.

Lamb, *Tales from Shakespeare*.

Arabian Nights.

Malory, *Boys' King Arthur*.

Van Loon, *Story of Mankind*.

Wiggin, *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*.

Burton E. Stevenson, *Home Book of Verse for Young Folks*.

Dickens, *Christmas Carol*.

Irving, *Rip Van Winkle*.

Mother Goose.

Dodge, *Hans Brinker*.

Hagedorn, *Boys' Life of Theodore Roosevelt*.

Hawthorne, *Wonderbook*.

Seton, *Wild Animals I Have Known*.

Spyri, *Heidi*.

Three books selected by the teachers but not included in the combined list were:

Riis, *The Making of an American*.

Baldwin, *Fifty Famous Stories*.

Eggleston, *Stories of Great Americans*.

Three books selected by librarians and not included on the joint list were:

Dickens, *David Copperfield*.

Grimm, *Household Stories*.

Wyss, *Swiss Family Robinson*.

The following resolution has been approved by the A.L.A. Council and by the Library Department of the N.E.A.:

The American Library Association believes that every student from the elementary school through the university should learn to use and appreciate books and libraries, not only that he may study to advantage in school, but also that he may continue through adult life to benefit from the resources of libraries.

To accomplish this there should be a supervisor of school libraries in every state and province, and a school librarian or supervisor for every school system—city, county, township or district.

We therefore recommend as a minimum standard that there be at least one full-time school librarian for an enrolment of 1,000 elementary- and high-school pupils.

Whether the school library supervisor or librarian shall be employed by school or library authorities, separately or jointly, is a matter to be determined by state or local conditions.

THE PERIODICALS

EUROPEAN STAGECRAFT

In the *Yale Review* for July appears an article on "Art in the European Theater" by Charles Moulton. He finds the modern theater in general more concerned with the staging than with the plays themselves. The present realistic staging cramps the imagination and at the same time separates the audience from the actors. The remedy for the difficulty will not be to return to the Greek theater or to the Elizabethan, neither of which had these weaknesses, but to evolve a new theater suited to the post-Ibsen period. Max Reinhardt's Spielhouse in Berlin attempts the solution by taking away the galleries and pushing the stage well out into the center of a practically circular room. Unfortunately in this case the building, which is a remodeled circus, is too large for the actors' voices. The new stagecraft will be characterized by simplicity

and symbolism, the setting not merely forming a harmonious background, but actually playing its part in maintaining the mood of the play. One Russian theater has *entr' act* curtains with pictures carrying on the action of the play. This is one extreme of the experiments in the new direction. The other extreme is to use for four dances of very different sorts the same setting, with appropriate changes in the masses of light. In one playhouse practically the same setting is used for all of Shakespeare's plays.

WHY THEY QUIT

H. T. Eaton reports in *School and Society* for August 19 an investigation of the scholarship of pupils who leave school. He finds that those who left averaged two and one-half times as many failures each as did the pupils who remained. Of the pupils whose reason for leaving school was known to be good, none had any failures. Those who left for no known good reason had three times as many failures each as the average pupils who remained in school. The implication is very strong that these left not because of economic pressure but because of dissatisfaction with the school.

In the same magazine H. H. Horn, the veteran teacher of the principles of education, publishes his "Students' Opinion of the Discussion Method," which he has been using for the last three or four years. They are almost unanimously in favor of it, feeling that it has kept them more interested and has brought out more points of view than would have been possible had even the best instructor lectured to them. They all seem to feel that it has worked so well because most of the class were mature in years and had some experience in teaching. Professor Horn himself, however, declares that he has used the method with high-school Sophomores to equally good effect.

TAKING THE ARTIST'S POINT OF VIEW

The first article in the September issue of the *Bookman*, "The Teaching of Literature: Chapter II," by John Erskine is likely to produce considerable discussion. For some time we have been teaching literature an amazing number of hours very conscientiously, yet we have not improved the quality of literature produced in this country. This failure is probably due to the wide schism between the teachers of literature and the creators of it. Too often literature has been studied as history, biology, bibliography, or philology, but all too rarely as an art. Let the teachers of literature take the point of view of the creative arts, as Brander Matthews, for instance, has led his pupils to do through the dramatic museum which he has built up in Columbia University. Let

the course in literature help the pupils to understand what literature is, what poetry is, what makes a book a good book, what decency in literature is; let it require the pupils not to tell what a book is about but to see beauty in that book. Such a reform will bring about a great change in our textbooks, only the really useful principles being set down. The teachers will need to remember, too, that art is not mere naturalism, not a mere attempt to reproduce the life of the present day, but an attempt to touch that life into beauty. Literature taught in this way by such teachers will result in the pupils seeing art through the artist's eyes, and in the next generation of authors writing with clearer understanding of what they are trying to do and of how it may be done.

THE NEGLECT OF TRADITION

"Matthew Arnold and American Letters Today" is the title of Norman Foerster's paper in the *Sewanee Review* for July-September. Matthew Arnold pronounced the romanticism of the early nineteenth century premature, inasmuch as its exemplars did not know enough. Professor Foerster sees danger of the same thing at the present time. We have too much tendency to revert to the contemporaneity of the animals, which, after all, is not the highest reach of the human spirit. Great art must be romantic, but it must also build upon the traditions of the past, and this is what very few of our present rebellious romantics seem willing to do. They are therefore likely to be of only temporary importance.

THE MERITS OF OTHELLO

Julian W. Abernethy has been irritated in reading *Othello* by Shakespeare's constant use of the phrase "honest Iago" and so takes that for the title of his paper in the *Sewanee Review*. He finds the phrase a keynote to the character of Iago and also to that of *Othello*, it being ironic in the first instance and straightforward in the second. Beyond this, however, he finds that the whole play is not true to human nature, at least in the emotional sense, although it is intellectually interesting. We know at the very start the character of both Iago and Othello, neither developing afterward, as most of Shakespeare's characters do. What remains is only to see how Iago may work out his purposes. Mr. Abernethy points out that there are many chances for comic by-play by Iago and that in some of the earlier records there is evidence that the character was sometimes played as a comedy part. While *Othello* is upon the stage perhaps the most successful work of Shakespeare, it is in real merit far below the great tragedies with which it is usually ranked; perhaps thought of by Shakespeare as nothing but a chance to amuse

the groundlings. Although Mr. Abernethy does not use the term, he evidently thinks of *Othello* as very closely akin to a potboiler.

HOW DO SPEECH AND WRITING DIFFER ?

C. H. Woolbert, editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education*, contributes to the June number of his own magazine a paper on "Speaking and Writing: A Study of Differences." Writing is made up of thought, language, and typography; speaking consists of thought, language, voice, and action. Thought and language seem at first to be common to both forms of expression, yet they are not exactly so. Written language is different from oral in that it must be sufficient in itself. Action and voice may complete or even overrule spoken words, but the written statement must be both complete and unambiguous. The thought in written composition is also different, inasmuch as it is addressed to a reader who is alone, relaxed, comfortable, and able to return to gather together details which are too numerous for comprehension at the first reading; whereas the thought of oral discourse is addressed to a person in a crowd, under strain, compelled to keep still, and with no opportunity to return to pick up missed points. Moreover, the speaker himself is different from the writer, being either roused or paralyzed by his audience. The writer addresses a universal audience, the speaker a very specific one. The speaker may be more intense or playful without giving offense. Failure to recognize these differences between speech and writing caused Burke to compose in such a style that the House was emptied by his speeches, though these were eagerly read by the members the next morning. We can see how different the thought of written composition must be from that of oral composition if we consider thought to be a "change brought about or hoped for in the person addressed." Necessarily, the instruments used will vary with the audience addressed. Again, the speaker can revise his statements if he sees that he is producing a wrong effect. The writer has no such privilege. Speech differs from writing in language even more than in thought. The reader can go back for anything he misses and has no distractions and can therefore put up with a much more elaborate style than can the hearer. Speaking is more informal in diction and syntax, perhaps less dignified, because it is not considered critically. The specialized meanings which may be brought out through Latin derivatives make these words more suitable for paper than for speech, where the more familiar Anglo-Saxon is to be preferred. Finally, there is a difference in the sentence structure, the speaker not being compelled to use placing to secure emphasis within the sentence, because he can attain the same end by vocal stress.